

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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S E C R E T STATE 184465 TOSEC 080137

NODIS

FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT ALEXANDRIA 0798 ACTION SECSTATE 05 AUG 77

QUOTE

S E C R E T ALEXANDRIA 0798

NODIS

DEPT PASS SECRETARY

FROM AMBASSADOR IN ALEXANDRIA

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS), EG, US

SUBJECT: REPORT FOR SADAT--DAMASCUS CONVERSATIONS

REF: SECTO 08051

1. MET WITH FAHMY 1800 LOCAL TODAY TO CONVEY POINTS

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REFTEL. HE HAD ALREADY SEEN NEWS REPORTS FROM DAMASCUS
BUT EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR YOUR THOUGHTFULNESS IN
SENDING MESSAGE. HE UNDERTOOK CONVEY IT TO SADAT LATER
TODAY.

2. RE SYRIAN REACTION TO IDEA OF FORMAL WORKING GROUP
IN NEW YORK, FAHMY CLAIMED HE HAD PREDICTED TO YOU THAT

ASAD'S REACTIN WOULD BE NEGATIVE BUT THAT KHADDAM WOULD ATTEND UNGA AND WOULD WANT TO REMAIN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH US. HE AGREED THAT A DIFFERENT WAY MUST NOW BE FOUND TO DESCRIBE THE CONTACTS YOU PROPOSE TO CONDUCT IN NEW YORK. PICKING UP YOUR POINT THAT SYRIAN REACTION PARTLY RESULTED FROM EGYPTIAN FAILURE CONSULT WITH SYRIANS ABOUT PROPOSAL, FAHMY WRYLY OBSERVED THAT WHAT CAME OUT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS NOT AN EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL. SADAT'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT THAT HE HAD EARLIER URGED PRESIDENT CARTER TO SET UP A WORKING GROUP UNDER YOUR DIRECTION WAS ALWAYS INTENDED TO MEAN AN AMERICAN WORKING GROUP WHICH WOULD DRAW UP THE HOPED FOR US VISUALIZATION. WHEN YOU PICKED UP SADAT'S REFERENCE AND SPOKE OF FONMINS' MEETING WITH YOU IN NEW YORK, THE FAT WAS IN THE FIRE. IT WAS NOT WHAT SADAT HAD INTENDED, BUT HE COULD NOT REDRESS SITUATION WITHOUT EMBARRASSMENT TO BOTH OF YOU. HE HAD, THEREFORE, TACITLY ACCEPTED IT, ALTHOUGH LATER THAT EVENING HE HAD CALLED FAHMY TO DISCUSS WHAT MIGHT BE DONE. THEY HAD AGREED THE IDEA SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO STAND. HOWEVER, SEVERAL NEWSMEN HAD ON BACKGROUND BASIS BEEN BRIEFED ON WHAT HAD HAPPENED. IN TELLING ME THIS, FAHMY MADE IT CLEAR GOE CONTINUES ACCEPT IDEA.

3. ON THE MATTER OF A UNIFIED DELEGATION, FAHMY REITERATED THE GOE VIEW THAT ASAD SUPPORTS A
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UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION CONCEPT MAINLY TO OBSTRUCT EGYPTIAN FLEXIBILITY IN CONDUCTING PEACE TALKS. ASAD, FAHMY PREDICTED, WILL PLAY THE PALESTINIANS AND THE JORDANIANS AGAINST EACH OTHER IN ORDER TO INSURE THAT EGYPT "WILL NOT MOVE FASTER THAN HE WISHES TO MOVE."

4. FAHMY ALSO ASKED THAT I ADVISE YOU THAT SADAT AND HE HAD MET WITH ARAFAT YESTERDAY. HE, FAHMY, HAD MADE THE PROPOSAL YOU AND HE HAD WORKED OUT, BUT HAD CALLED IT AN EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL. TO HIS SURPRISE, ARAFAT HAD STATED THAT HE HAD HAD A SIMILAR SUGGESTION FROM THE SAUDIS, MADE AT USG BEHEST. THE SUGGESTION PASSED THROUGH THE SAUDIS SIMPLY ASKED PLO TO ACCEPT UN RESOLUTION 242 AND ENTER A RESERVATION REGARDING ITS VIEWS ON THE REFUGEE ISSUE. THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL, ARAFAT HAD NOTED, GOES BEYOND WHAT THE SAUDIS HAD SUGGESTED IN SPECIFICALLY STATING THAT THE PLO ACCEPTS THE RIGHT OF ALL STATES IN THE AREA TO LIVE IN PEACE AND SECURITY WITHIN RECOGNIZED BORDERS. FAHMY NOTED IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HELPFUL HAD HE KNOWN THAT WE HAD AEARLIER DISCUSSED THE CONCEPT WITH THE SAUDIS. AS IT WAS, THE DISCREPANCY HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT

EMBARRASSING FOR HIM. I POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT OUR MESSAGE ON THE FAHD VISIT HAD INDICATED WE HAD MENTIONED SUCH A CONCEPT TO FAHD. I COULD ONLY ASSUME THAT FAHD HAD SUBSEQUENTLY MADE SUCH A SUGGESTION TO ARAFAT. I WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY RECENT MESSAGES TO THE SAUDIS ON THE SUBJECT. HAD THERE BEEN ANY, I WAS SURE YOU WOULD HAVE MENTIONED THEM TO HIM. YOU DO APPRECIATE HIS WILLINGNESS TO HELP IN CONNECTION WITH THE PLO AND CERTAINLY HAVE NO DESIRE TO CAUSE HIM ANY EMBARRASSMENT. FAHMY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE MUST HAVE MISSED THAT POINT IN OUR REPORT ON THE FAHD VISIT AND AGREED THAT IT MAY HAVE PROMPTED THE SAUDI SUGGESTION TO ARAFAT. IN ANY CASE, ARAFAT HAD TOLD HIM HE NEEDED FORTY-EIGHT HOURS TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL AND HAD THEREAFTER IMMEDIATELY
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EMPLANED FOR SAUDI ARABIA. FAHMY EXPECTS HIM BACK IN NEXT FEW DAYS AND UNDERTOOK LET US KNOW SOON AS HE HAS ARAFAT'S REPLY.
CHASE.
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER.

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